

Application Serial No. 10/612,475
Examiner: A.M. Dunwoody
Art Unit: 3679

PATENT
M&G No. 01945.0185US01

In the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows. This Listing of the Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. No new matter has been added.

Listing of the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) *A coupler device for fluid transport, comprising:*

a body including an outer surface being a circumferential outer sidewall, said outer sidewall having a first end and a second end with an opening extending through said first and second ends, said body defining a slot disposed proximate one of said first end or second end, said slot extending in a direction transverse to said opening and through said outer sidewall;

a latch assembly including at least one outer member being disposed on said body externally exposed of said outer surface and connected with an inner member being disposed through said slot, said outer member protruding from said outer surface and reciprocates reciprocating with respect to said outer sidewall, said inner member reciprocates within said slot and having an aperture corresponding with said opening, whereby said body being releasably connectable with a piece of fluid transport equipment through said inner member; and

an overmold portion formed about on said outer sidewall of said body, said overmold portion defining a material molded over said body as an additional layer, such that said overmold portion is formed substantially about said outer sidewall, said overmold portion including a shroud portion partially covering said outer member of said latch assembly, said shroud portion being a protruded structure extending outward from the outer sidewall.

2. (Original) *The coupler device according to claim 1, wherein said body including a connection means disposed at one of said first or second ends opposite said slot, whereby said connection means being connectable to a fluid transport system.*

3. (Original) *The coupler device according to claim 2, wherein said connection means being a groove residing between said outer sidewall and said opening, said groove being a socket fitting.*

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4. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 1, wherein a part of said outer surface of said body having a recessed face disposed about said slot and extending in a direction along said outer surface toward said first and second ends.

5. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 4, wherein said recessed face being substantially planar, said recessed face being engageable with a portion of said outer member, said portion reciprocates with respect to said recessed face and over said slot.

6. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 1, wherein said opening of said body substantially being radially symmetrical.

7. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 1, wherein said body is constructed of a molded material, said molded material being more rigid than said overmold portion.

8. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 1, wherein said outer member of said latch assembly including an actuating member, a biasing member and a retaining member, said actuating member and said retaining member being connected at oppositely disposed ends of said inner member and outside said slot, and said biasing member being between said actuating member and said inner member, said biasing member being disposed on said outer surface over said slot and enabling said actuating member and retaining member to reciprocate with respect to said outer surface.

9. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 1, wherein said shroud portion of said overmold portion being a wall adjacent and around said outer member of said latch assembly, said wall extending in a direction transverse to said outer surface.

10. (Original) The coupler device according to claim 9, wherein said wall protrudes a distance being at least the same as a distance said outer member protrudes from said outer surface.

11. (Withdrawn) The coupler device according to claim 1, further comprising a valve assembly insertable into said first or second end of said body and opposite said slot, said valve

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assembly being in fluid communication with said opening and being actuatable from a normally closed position to an open position.

12. (Withdrawn) The coupler device according to claim 11, wherein said valve assembly including a poppet member, a sleeve and a biasing member, said poppet member being coaxially mounted within said opening of said body, said sleeve being disposed between said poppet member and an inner wall of said body defined by said opening, said sleeve being slidably engaged with said poppet member and said inner wall where said biasing member is disposed coaxially between said sleeve and said poppet member, said biasing member biases said sleeve in sealing engagement with said poppet member, such that said valve assembly is in said normally closed position.

13. (Withdrawn) The coupler device according to claim 1, further comprising an insert assembly insertable into said first or second end of said body proximate said slot, said insert assembly being in fluid communication with said opening and being actuatable from a normally closed position to an open position upon connection with said body.

14. (Withdrawn) The coupler device according to claim 13, wherein said insert assembly including an overmold having a color the same as a color on said overmold of said coupling body.

15. (Withdrawn) A method of making a molded coupler, comprising:
forming a molded body having an outer surface being a circumferential outer sidewall, said outer sidewall having a first end and a second end with an opening extending through said first and second ends, said body defining a slot disposed proximate one of said first end or second end, said slot extending in a direction transverse to said opening and through said outer sidewall;
forming a soft overmold portion over said outer sidewall of said body;
forming a shroud portion while forming said overmold portion, said shroud portion protruding a distance transverse to said outer surface;
providing a latch assembly disposed within said slot, said latch assembly including at least one outer member being disposed outside said molded body and connected with an inner

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member being disposed through said slot, said outer member protruding from said outer surface of said body;

wherein said shroud portion protrudes a distance transverse to said outer surface, such that said shroud portion partially covers said outer member.

16 (New) The coupler device according to claim 7, wherein said body is an injection molded rigid plastic material.

17 (New) The coupler device according to claim 16, wherein said rigid plastic material is polypropylene.

18. (New) The coupler device according to claim 7, wherein said overmold portion is an injection molded low tolerance material.

19. (New) The coupler device according to claim 18, wherein said low tolerance plastic material is a soft thermoplastic rubber material.